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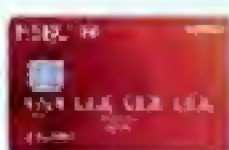
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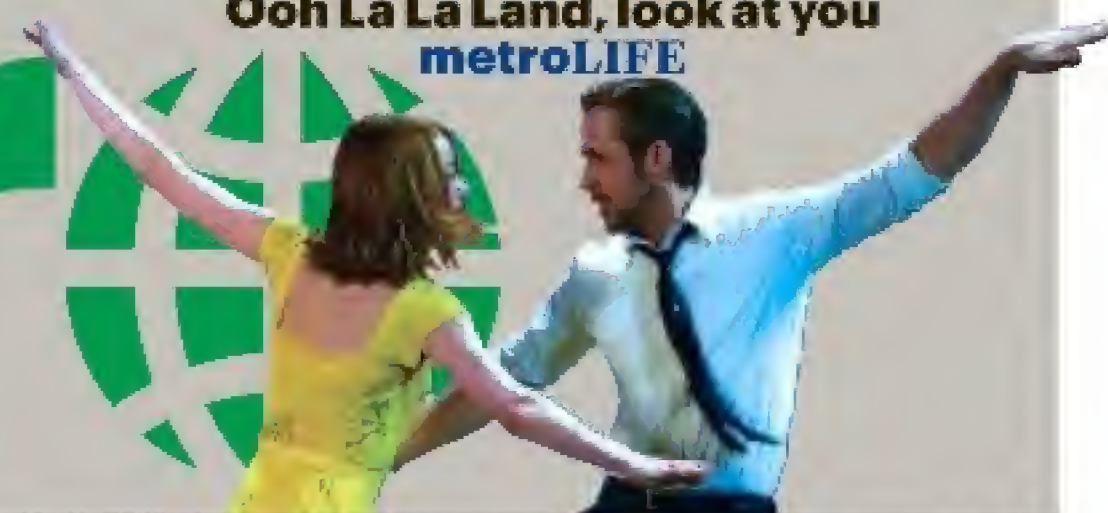


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# Calgary metro

**GOLDEN GLOBES**  
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**metroLIFE**



Your essential daily news | TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

High -10°C/Low -21°C Mostly sunny

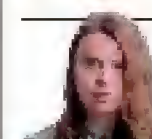
# 'Travis Vader, where are the bodies of my parents?'

**Bret McCann confronts killer at sentencing** **metroNEWS**

## Uber drivers feeling stiffed

**RIDESHARING**

**Complaints of fare decreases, surge pricing in grand return**



**Helen Pike**  
Metro | Calgary

Uber's drivers aren't feeling the love, seeing their fare rates drop in the rideshare giant's relaunch.

Drivers are reporting their earnings are down, some by 30 per cent, and rides from downtown to the airport that used to net \$22 to \$24 are now down to \$18, according to some drivers.

What's more, drivers aren't seeing surge pricing like they used to, which was a huge incentive in the previous launch for business-savvy operators, who would wait for demand and take advantage of padded fares.

But Uber Calgary's fares are still higher than they are in Edmonton, and Uber has given driv-

ers an "hourly fare guarantee."

"From our past experience, when fares are reduced, more riders start using Uber and drivers can make more due to higher demand," said Uber Canada spokesman Jean-Christophe de Le Rue.

Drivers in Calgary are supposed to earn at least \$20 per hour, as per the guarantee, which fluctuates depending on the day.

Uber driver Chris Lix points out several changes. The base fare went from \$2.75 to \$1.30, per minute is down eight cents — the list goes on. These things add up, and side by side, looking at his earnings last November compared with this past weekend, there's a stark difference.

But drivers seem relatively OK with the lower fare prices, just not with what they see as a lack of surge-pricing incentive.

"Someone told me they were trying to get an Uber for an hour on 17th Avenue on Saturday before I picked them up," Lix said. "So demand is obviously very high. I bet you there would have been a lot more drivers if the surges showed the demand."



## SKATE WITH SANTA

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\$40,000<sup>1</sup> minimum donation to aid Closer to Home's Adopt-A-Family program and other important work.



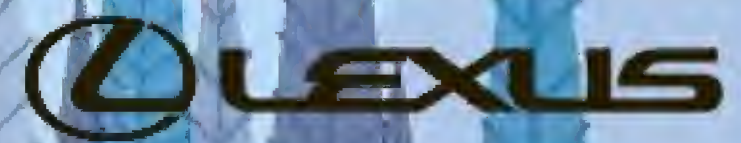
\$500 from each vehicle sold goes to help local families. Until January 3<sup>rd</sup>.



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| 40 MONTHS                             | DOWN PAYMENT \$3,760*        |                      |
| PAYMENT INCLUDES \$2,000* AWD CREDIT. |                              |                      |

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\*Representative lease example based on a 2017 NX 200t six '4' on a 40 month term at an annual rate of 1.9% and Complete Lexus Price of \$46,536. Bi-weekly lease payment is \$219 with \$3,760 down payment or equivalent trade in, \$0 security deposit and first bi-weekly lease payment due at lease inception. Total of 86 bi-weekly lease payments required during the lease term. Total lease obligation is \$22,774. \*Representative lease example based on a 2017 RX 350 six '4' on a 40 month term at an annual rate of 1.9% and Complete Lexus Price of \$59,586. Bi-weekly lease payment is \$279 with \$3,920 down payment or equivalent trade in, \$0 security deposit and first bi-weekly lease payment due at lease inception. Total of 86 bi-weekly lease payments required during the lease term. Total lease obligation is \$28,109. 60,000 kilometre allowance, charge of \$0.20/km for excess kilometres. Complete Lexus Price include freight and PDI (\$2,045), Dealer fees, block heater (\$237), air conditioning charge (\$100), tire charge (\$20), AMVIC fee (\$5) and Filters (up to \$1.90). License, insurance, registration (if applicable), and taxes are extra. Lexus Dealers are free to set their own prices. Limited time offers only apply to retail customers at participating Lexus Dealers. Dealer order/trade may be required (but may not be available in certain circumstances). Offers are subject to change or cancellation without notice. Offers expire at month's end unless extended or revised. See your Lexus Dealer for complete details. \*Calgary Lexus Dealers will donate the greater of (i) \$500 for every new 2016 and 2017 Lexus vehicle sold by the Calgary Lexus Dealers during the program period; and (ii) a minimum donation of \$40,000. The guaranteed minimum donation of \$40,000 will be made regardless of the number of new 2016 and 2017 Lexus vehicles sold by Calgary Lexus Dealers during the program period; however, every new Lexus unit sold beyond 80 units an extra \$500 donation to Closer to Home.





# 'I'm a throwaway human being' to social services

FOSTER CARE

## Mother fights to get her kids back after four years in system



**Kevin Maimann**  
Metro | Edmonton

Jennifer has a Christmas wish list from each of her two daughters, but the system that cares for the girls won't let her give them their gifts.

The Edmonton woman — whose real name Metro is altering to protect the identity of her daughters — has been fighting for four years to gain custody of her kids since they were placed in foster care.

She gets two hours a month to see them, supervised, and has been granted an extra half hour on Christmas.

After years of fighting with the child welfare system, Jennifer said she is sitting in isolation.

"They've now kept these kids in care for four years for no good reason," she said.

Jennifer's daughters were living with their father when social services took them in 2012 after the children accused him

of physical assault.

Charges against the father were staid, and he has since passed away from cancer.

Jennifer, who said she was separated from the girls' father and living in a different home at the time, used to see them frequently. She said she has never received a satisfactory explanation for why she could not be given custody of the girls, who are now nine and 11 years old.

"I just can't say enough about how difficult it's been," she said.

Jennifer said she has three university degrees and currently works in government.

She said her attempts at getting information, such as reports from the foster parents of her girls, have been thwarted at every step.



**Parents should clearly know why their kids are in care.**

Jennifer

the government has been looking for reasons to keep her away, rather than working toward the best interest of her and the children, ever since the decision was made to place them in care.

She said she has been forced to take drug tests and was told she is a narcissist — a claim she denies.

"I'm a throwaway human be-

ing to children's services," she said.



An Edmonton woman who Metro cannot identify is speaking out about her struggles with Alberta's child welfare system. TIM QUERENGESSER/METRO

ing to children's services," she said.

"If you actually make people villains, and you create one-dimensional characters that they are totally a villain, then you actually stop listening to the facts that are presented to you. And that's what they've done."

Aside from being barred from giving gifts, she said she is not allowed to have her daughters

at her home and has been told not to speak of their father or say anything negative about their foster parents.

"They're trying to break attachment," she said.

Alberta's child intervention system has been the subject of heated debate in the legislature since details emerged last month about four-year-old Serenity, who died in 2014 after being severely

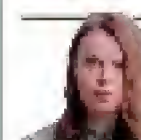
physically abused while in government care.

The Human Services department did not return Metro's calls Monday, but minister Irfan Sabir announced a ministerial panel last week to examine the child welfare system.

Jennifer said she feels shame, trauma and grief over her experience and is calling for openness and transparency.

DOWNTOWN

## Skaters want in on cycle track



**Helen Pike**  
Metro | Calgary

The downtown bike track pilot meticulously calculated bike ridership, but what hasn't been tapped is the alternative commutes, like the kick and push of four wheels zipping down the protected lanes.

That's what the Calgary Association of Skateboarding Enthusiasts (CASE) wants to see more of. So, as the discussions on cycle tracks move forward, CASE is hoping to ramp up change that has stopped them from skating in the protected tracks.

For some time, it's been understood by skateboarders that downtown's streets are off-limits to them, so when the cycle track was implemented that same assumption held.

"Skateboards or in-line skates are permitted on most city sidewalks or boulevards unless otherwise posted," reads the City of Calgary website. "They are not permitted within the central traffic zone."

The central traffic zone is bounded on the north by the Bow River, east by the easterly limit of 4 Street east, south by the south limit of 9 Avenue south and west by 9 Street west.

"It's important to have skateboarding allowed, not only in the cycle track, but in downtown as well," said Zev Klymochko, with CASE.

The cycle track pilot will be discussed Dec. 19 in city hall, where council will decide if the protected lanes stay or go.



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**05**  
— TO —  
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**18**

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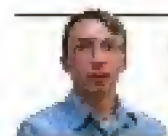
\*EXACT PRIZE MAY NOT BE AS PICTURED



# City looks at more East Village parking

## DEVELOPMENT

### Structure to have more than 500 stalls



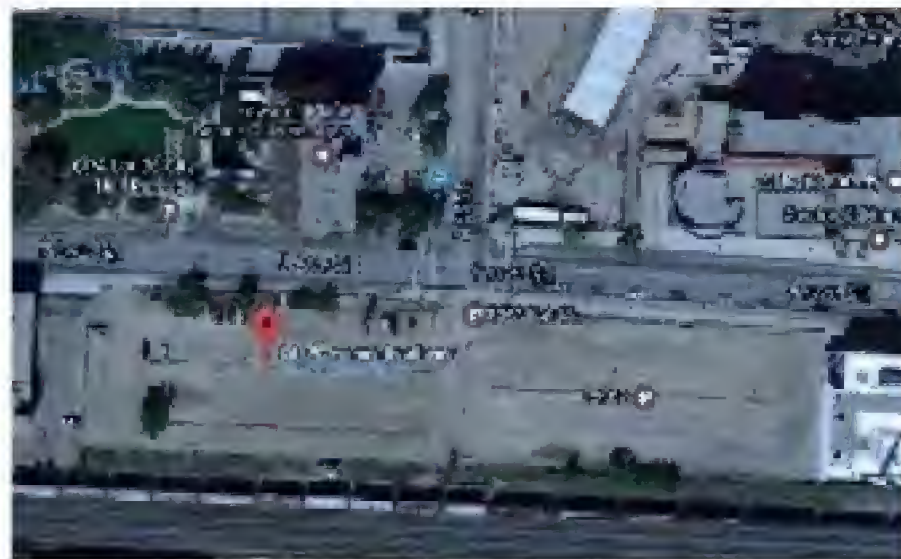
**Brodie Thomas**  
Metro | Calgary

The parking lot on 9 Avenue SE directly south of 3 Street SE could eventually see a 500-stall parking garage, if a proposed loan from the city goes ahead.

Administration is asking council to approve a \$57.5-million interest-free loan to the Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) to build the structure, which could have between 510 and 600 stalls.

Priorities and Finance Committee vice-chairman Coun. Ward Sutherland said the loan would come from the city's Revolving Fund Reserve for General Land Purchases.

That \$87-million reserve is



The parking lot now known as Lot 62 is set to be developed by CMLC into a larger parking structure with more than 500 stalls.  
GOOGLE MAPS

used to help facilitate growth and development in areas that need a boost. The money eventually gets paid back.

"We're looking for the entertainment district to go between the Stampede Grounds and the East Village," said Sutherland. "By doing these types of things, this is how we get investment

to go there."

Susan Veres, senior VP for CMLC, said neither the National Music Centre nor the New Central Library have parking, so this will help alleviate some of that stress.

Veres said they will be purchasing the land and overseeing the construction of the struc-

ture, but then they'll be turning the parking garage over to the Calgary Parking Authority, which already has the reserves to pay for it.

She said in terms of getting things done quickly, it makes more sense for CMLC to receive the loan and oversee construction.

Sutherland said the investment is a win-win for everyone, including the taxpayer.

"It's much more expensive to go back in areas where you have pockets that aren't developed properly," he said.

"Good luck getting investment in those pockets."

He noted that the city has already done a critical analysis of the deal at the Land and Assets Strategy Committee.

"Unfortunately 99 per cent (of those meetings) are in camera because they have to do with numbers and we don't want competitors to know the dollars that we're selling stuff, because we want to get the best price."

## CRIME

### Police create two new break-and-enter teams

Calgary police have refocused resources to nip a growing problem in the bud.

On average, 23 break and enters happen in Calgary every day. The petty crime has increased 39 per cent this year from the five-year average. That's a huge issue — and officers believe the increase in snaffles can be linked to stolen vehicles and drug crimes.

CPS has created two central-

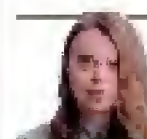
ized break-and-enter teams who concentrate on commercial and residential break and enters in the city. Police say these new teams are able to link cases together, book "prolific offenders" and get back stolen goods.

The teams have worked on about 272 files, netted 600 charges and recovered nearly \$850,000 worth of stolen goods.

METRO

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### Petition for closure of penguin exhibit



**Helen Pike**  
Metro | Calgary

A petition started Monday morning against the penguin exhibit at the Calgary Zoo garnered more than 400 signatures in a few hours.

The petition demands that the zoo shut down the exhibit permanently after last week's death of seven penguins.

"This kind of death should be preventable. Penguins should not be suddenly and mysteriously dying of stress," reads the petition, written by Amelia Meister.

"Drowning is a nearly unheard of death for penguins.

These penguins should be living in a place where they are not exposed to sudden stressful events that could cause them to die."

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Bret McCann, with his wife, Mary-Ann McCann, speaks to the media after giving a victim impact statement during the sentencing hearing for Travis Vader at the Edmonton Law Courts.

CODIE MCLACHLAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

## 'I will never forgive'

TRAVIS VADER SENTENCING

### Bret McCann tells hearing of futile search for his parents

Married for 57 years, they were kindred spirits and called each other darling.

Lyle McCann, 78, was known for his patience, a retired long-haul trucker who liked to play cribbage and watch curling on TV. Marie, 77, could whip up a five-course family meal and fill a room with her laughter.

Bret McCann has a recurring nightmare of his parents' death — how one of them was killed first while the other had to watch in horror knowing he or she was next.

But he doesn't know the de-

tails of what happened on July 3, 2010, the day his parents were slain after they left their Edmonton-area home on a camping trip to British Columbia.

Their burned-out motorhome and a vehicle they had been towing were discovered in the days after they vanished.

Their bodies have never been found.

"The one individual who knows where my parents are has said nothing for this whole time," Bret McCann told a sentencing hearing Monday.

"Travis Vader, where are the bodies of my parents?"

Justice Denny Thomas convicted Vader earlier this year of manslaughter. The judge concluded Vader was a desperate drug addict who had come across the seniors in their RV and killed them during a robbery.

Vader, 44, sat expressionless in the prisoner's box as victim impact statements from several McCann family members which painted a picture of an adoring, gentle couple were read in court.

Bret McCann recounted how his family put up posters and billboards, raised reward money and organized searches for his parents when there was still hope they were alive.

"Vader has shown no sign of acknowledging that he even caused the death of my parents. He shows no remorse," McCann said.

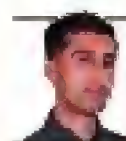
"We will never forget and I will never forgive what Travis Vader has done."

Outside court, he told reporters that he might be able to forgive Vader if he revealed where the bodies are.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ENTERTAINMENT

## Old Trout Puppet theatre remounts its very first show



Aaron Chatha  
Metro | Calgary

Peter Balkwill just opened a box to his past.

For years the box sat in a corner of the Old Trout Puppet Workshop, gathering dust. Since 1999, the box followed them from location to location, bouncing around as the company grew.

Inside the box are the puppets and set for their debut product, *The Unlikely Birth of Istvan*, which the crew is reviving for a special performance in 2017.

See, in 1999, when the show first went up, the founders of the Old Trout Puppet Workshop weren't even in Calgary — they were living in Southern Alberta, at the Palmer Ranch.

In exchange for space and lodging to grow their artistic skills, the crew would wake up at dawn to help with the farm — which including gathering eggs from the chicken coop, herding goats and feeding the pigs.

"Apparently, if you fall into



Judd Palmer and the show's crew did farm chores in return for living and rehearsal space.  
COURTESY JASON STANG

the pen — the pigs could potentially eat you," Balkwill recalled.

It was a tough time — with little money for art supplies, they had to get creative with the puppets. They were working while also trying to stay warm and have enough to eat.

"Out of that experience, we sort of conjured a metaphysical, visual poem to answer the biggest questions of the universe: where do we come from and why are we here?" Balk-

will explained. Thus, they gave birth to Istvan and his story.

Inside the box Balkwill was surprised to see that mice hadn't chewed the pieces to ribbons. It's taken some time to put the set together — back in the day, there were no computers to store records.

"Everything was written on scraps of paper and stuffed into drawers, which have long since gone missing or were used to patch the walls in our various studio situations," he laughed.

Looking at the set there are messages scrawled into the back — some are notes on when to enter a scene, others a reminder to call home after a show.

They'll be updating the show a bit, given they've grown so much. In 1999, everything was so immediate and day-to-day. Now Old Trout performs internationally, planning years in advance.

But mostly, it'll remain faithful to that camaraderie and glimmer of hope that launched their puppet theatre company.

The *Unlikely Birth of Istvan* returns in March for the Festival of Animated Objects.

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# Refugee program in spotlight

## CONFERENCE

### Global experts to look at how settlement effort works



**Ryan Tumilty**  
Metro | Ottawa

Experts from around the world are heading to Ottawa this week to see what Canada gets right on resettling refugees.

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is hosting a three-day conference from Tuesday to Thursday aiming to showcase Canada's private refugee sponsorship program.

That program allows Canadians to sponsor a refugee family coming to Canada.

University of Ottawa professor Jennifer Bond is among the organizers of the event. She said Canada's system is unique in the world and has a lot to offer.

"There have been a few very small-scale pilots in a couple of jurisdictions, but really Can-



Registered Early Childhood Education Educator **Kimberly Vandermeer** leads Syrian refugee children in circle time activities during a playgroup organized by Ottawa Community Health Centres in Ottawa. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ada is the only country that has a big robust program," she said.

Representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States are coming to



Canada is the only country that has a big robust program.

Jennifer Bond, University of Ottawa

the conference.

Bond said while any poten-

tial program would have to be tailored to the individual coun-

try, there is a lot to share here.

"What is common in many places around the world is compassion that lives in communities. I really think there are caring people all over the world who recognize the tragedy that is happening," she said.

She said with that base a private sponsorship program could be tailored for any one of these countries.

"It's not about taking Canada's model and just plunking it somewhere else, it's very much about taking the expertise that Canada has to offer," she said.

Bond said while some politicians around the world have had negative things to say about refugee resettlement, it's nice to see so many countries interested in the Canadian model.

"In a space that does feel a little bit dark these days this initiative does offer some hope," she said.

The initiative is led by the government of Canada, but also has participation from the University of Ottawa, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and several foundations.

## HEALTH CARE

### Injection sites made simpler

The federal Liberals are streamlining the process to allow communities to apply to set up supervised injection sites quicker, with less red tape and with less room for community objections.

Health Minister Jane Philpott introduced the bill that would clear out a long list of regulations and conditions for establishing sites that the previous Conservative government introduced.

Those conditions included a requirement to have the approval of a community's council and its police chief. In Ottawa, both Mayor Jim Watson and Ottawa police Chief Charles Bordeleau have indicated they don't support an injection site.

Philpott said the changes are necessary to deal with a public health crisis that is only growing.



We need to take swift action on the opioid crisis.

Health Minister Jane Philpott

"We need to take swift action on the opioid crisis to save lives. We need a renewed focus on harm reduction," she said.

British Columbia and Alberta have seen the most pronounced increase, but communities across the country have seen a dramatic spike in overdose deaths from fentanyl, a synthetic opioid.

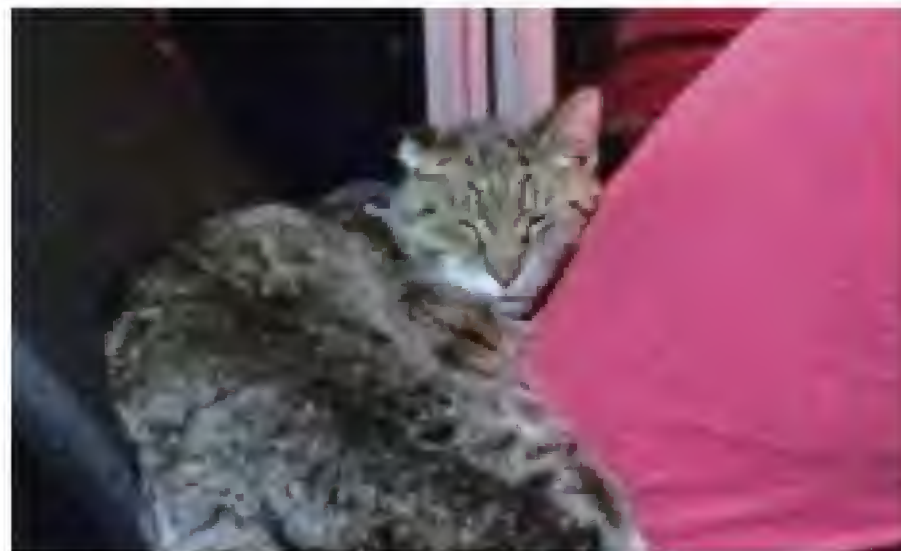
Ottawa police have confirmed that fentanyl has been found in street drugs in the city, and its much stronger cousin carfentanyl has been found in Ontario.

Philpott said the previous government's long list of conditions was a major barrier to getting safe injection sites set up. She said the overall goal of the changes in the new bill is to treat drug addiction as a health problem not a justice system issue.

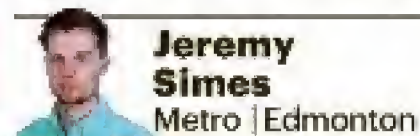
RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

## ALBERTA

### Crew saves frozen cat that hitched a cold train ride



Q the cat was saved by two train drivers. CONTRIBUTED



**Jeremy Simes**  
Metro | Edmonton

A nearly frozen tabby cat and a "young, strong burly man with a beard," fell in love Sunday after two train drivers found the frozen feline under their engine deck in Wainwright.

Train engineer William Munsey and conductor Brad Slater were working a chilly Sunday morning when they had to drive the Q199 CN train from the small Alberta town to Ed-

monton.

Temperatures were nearly -40 C with the wind chill.

The two drivers had to inspect incoming trains in the rail yard and, according to Munsey, Slater left to inspect the train's engines.

But Slater found something out of the ordinary. Using his flashlight, he came across a pair of glowing eyes. It was a grey tabby, frozen solid.

Slater called Munsey over the radio.

"When I walked over he said,

"There's a cat," Munsey recalled.

Slater wrapped the cat in

his shirt and, after an hour of howling meows, the grey tabby curled up in his lap and purred. The feline then gladly ate some beef jerky.

Munsey said Slater chose to initially name the cat Q199, which is the name of the train all three of them drove in. He has since simplified the tabby's name to "Q."

"It's a neat thing," Munsey said. "This is a cold, hard, brutal industry and here's this cat, and everyone is smiling over this cat ... these tiny acts of kindness are important."

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# UN calls situation in Aleppo 'very critical'

SYRIA

## Ban Ki-moon warns against 'atrocities'

United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon has expressed alarm over "atrocities against a large number of civilians, including women and children, in recent hours in Aleppo."

Syrian rebels retreated from former strongholds in eastern Aleppo in a "terrifying" collapse Monday, holding onto a small sliver of territory packed with fighters and thousands of civilians as government troops pressed on with their rapid advance.

The Syrian military said it had gained control of 99 per cent of the former opposition enclave in eastern Aleppo, signalling an impending end to the rebels' four-year hold over parts of the city as the final hours of battle played out.

"The situation is very, very critical," said Ibrahim al-Haj of



Syrians flee towards safer areas in Aleppo on Monday during government forces' efforts to retake the city. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

the Syrian Civil Defence, volunteer first responders who operate in rebel-held areas. He said he was seeking shelter for himself and his family, fearing clashes or capture by the government.

Retaking Aleppo, which has been divided between rebel- and

government-controlled zones since 2012, would be President Bashar Assad's biggest victory in the country's civil war. But it does not end the conflict: Significant parts of Syria are still outside government control and huge swaths of the country are

a devastated waste-land.

Ban urged all parties on the ground "to protect civilians and abide by international humanitarian and human rights law."

METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## GLOBAL DIGEST

TENNESSEE

### Terminally ill 5-year-old boy dies in Santa's arms

A Tennessee Santa Claus says a terminally ill 5-year-old boy died in his arms after he gave the child a present in the hospital.

The Knoxville News-Sentinel reports Eric Schmitt-Matzen, who does about 80 events a year as Santa, was asked a few

weeks ago to visit the dying boy.

Schmitt-Matzen says he gave the child a toy. He says the boy gave him a big hug, asked "Santa, can you help me?" and died in his arms.

Schmitt-Matzen says it took him days to recover, but he's continuing to play Santa.

The News-Sentinel report didn't include details on the boy or the hospital. Schmitt-Matzen didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VENEZUELA

### Government seizes 4 million toys to give to poor children

Venezuela's socialist government has seized nearly 4 million toys from a private company and says it will hand them out as Christmas gifts to poor children this holiday season.

The country's fair pricing authority seized the toys Friday from three warehouses run by Kreisel, Venezuela's largest toy distributor. Two company executives were detained on suspicion of promoting

price speculation.

Agency director William Contreras alleged that Kreisel under-reported its inventory in order to sell some toys at higher prices. Kreisel has not commented officially beyond responding to Twitter messages of support.

Authorities said local supply committees will be in charge of distributing the toys "fairly" to children.

Venezuela has been wracked by a deep economic crisis accompanied by shortages of goods ranging from food staples to medicine. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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## CHANTAL HÉBERT ON TRUDEAU'S YEAR-END PRESSER



**It can't have come as a surprise to the prime minister that while he was asked what he regretted about his first full year in office, he was not queried about what he believes were his successes.**

Justin Trudeau would not be human if he had not wished the year-end news conference he gave on Monday on Parliament Hill to provide him — in the spirit of the upcoming holiday season — with an opportunity to celebrate the many missions he believes his government accomplished in 2016.

But he would not be where he is today if he still believed in Santa Claus. And so it can't have come as a surprise to the prime minister that while he was asked what, if anything, he regretted most about his first full year in office, he was not similarly queried about what he believes was his greatest success.

For the record, Trudeau said the execution in the Philippines of two Canadians held hostage for ransom by Islamic extremists had made for his darkest hours as prime minister. A less introvert Stephen Harper would have answered along the same lines. The responsibility to make life-and-death decisions is one that no prime minister takes lightly.

On the plus side, Trudeau might have liked to bask a little longer in the afterglow of the climate pact ratified Friday by 11 of Canada's 13 provincial and territorial governments. After all, when Canada signed the Paris climate accord a year ago,

many commentators doubted the capacity of the rookie government to do the heavy lifting required to translate talk into concerted federal-provincial action.

matter before the holidays. The relative radio silence that has attended the aftermath of the first ministers' dinner suggests a compromise designed to allow every-



**IN A REFLECTIVE MOOD** Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks at his year-in-review press conference at the National Press Theatre in Ottawa on Monday. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

But it is the nature of politics that one crisis chases another and so three items of unfinished but time-sensitive business took precedence:

1) More so than climate change, health-care funding has been an apple of discord between Trudeau and the premiers. It was initially Harper who decreed that as of next year the annual increase of the federal health transfer would fall to 3 per cent from 6 per cent. Ever since Trudeau made that Conservative decision his own, the provinces have been crying foul.

The issue was the main topic of the dinner Trudeau hosted for the premiers Friday night. On Monday, the prime minister said he expected a resolution of the

one to save face is in the works.

2) On electoral reform and Trudeau's promise of a new voting system in time for the 2019 election, the Liberals have ended up tangled in a web of their own weaving. Monday, the prime minister professed excitement about the ongoing government's online consultation — the one that almost everyone else has talked about for the wrong reasons. The exercise's main claim to fame is to have inspired parodies in both official languages.

Over the past six months, much of the intellectual energy of the top levels of the government has been focused on the dual issues of pipelines and climate change — at some cost to lesser files. If there is a point to

Trudeau's latest contribution to this comedy of errors, it may be to buy the Liberals time so as to regroup and figure out where to go from the current electoral reform quagmire between now and when the House resumes in late January.

3) Political financing, finally, was never meant to be on the Liberal radar and its appearance has not been good news for the government. It has seemed both blindsided by and blind to the widespread public perception that the prime minister is being elastic in his interpretation of his own ethical rules when he allows his party to trade access to himself and his cabinet for donations.

Based on Trudeau's news conference, that blindness starts at the very top. On Monday, the prime minister said donors did use the access their money bought to lobby him but that it had no impact on his decisions. He compared chatting with donors at exclusive private events to the hosts of closed-door meetings he holds with municipal politicians and/or community organizations.

Trudeau sees a parallel between the discussions he has with representatives of other levels of governments, such as the premiers he spent the day with on Friday and well-heeled contributors to his party's coffers. At this rate, he will soon be reassuring his provincial counterparts that he does not hold it against them that they get to spend quality time with him free of charge. After all, time is money in Liberal land.

**Chantal Hébert** is a national affairs writer.

## Calgarians giveth, and then giveth some more



**Darren Krause**  
Metro | Calgary

Let's agree that 2016 has been a rough year on Albertans.

But we haven't lost that giving spirit. It's one of the many badges of honour Calgarians can be proud of sharing.

This past week has shown that despite many Calgarians being down on their luck, there's still a sense that we can do something for those who may not be so fortunate. Or for those who need a little bit of joy in their lives.

We've suffered through prolonged economic doldrums, forcing tens of thousands of people out of work. Times are indeed tough for a great many people in our city.

It's easy to gird ourselves in times like this, to brace for what could be our own fate in the face of what seems like a mountain of layoffs, to withdraw from giving — just in case.

Instead, seeing the generosity of Calgarians recently has been a bright light in what could be otherwise seen as a dismal year.

Three things happened over the last 10 days that really show how the citizens of Calgary respond to seeing those in need.

First, the annual News Talk 770 pledge day raised more than \$329,000 for their Calgary Children's Foundation. It was a record day for their charity. And it was driven by donations from people like you.

Next comes the tale of Kim De Gagne, a man stricken with multiple myeloma, an incurable blood and bone cancer. Mr. De Gagne just wanted to sell out of Christmas trees so he could take his lovely wife on one last trip to Hawaii.

Calgarians once again responded.

Dozens upon dozens of Nova Scotia balsam fir trees were purchased from his McKenzie Towne lot, where he's been set up for the past 11 years. Last year, De Gagne barely sold enough trees to cover his costs; this year, he sold out of trees a month earlier than planned. That's once again because of Calgarians like you.

Then there's the story of Diedrich Penner. It literally took Calgary by storm during the recent winter blast.

Mr. Penner is a hardworking man trying to make ends meet, quite often giving so much to others. He was filmed, by city realtor Kim Star, precariously puttering along Deerfoot Trail during the snow and bitter cold. On a scooter. Yes, on a scooter.

Once that story exploded, guess what? Calgarians responded.

Thousands of dollars were raised within a day to help Mr. Penner put together the money to get a new vehicle. Then AutoMaxx came forward to outright give him a new vehicle. The 2010 Dodge Charger came complete with a three-year warranty, six months' insurance, new windshield and a set of winter tires.

Calgary, aren't we supposed to be facing our own set of economic challenges? Aren't we all tightening our belts?

Yet you continue to give.

These are just three examples. I know there are dozens more.

Despite the challenges we face, it always feels like we're in this together. People helping people is the Calgary way.

It might just be enough to help tide us over to what appears to be a brighter looking 2017.

**The Liberals have seemed both blindsided by and blind to the perception that the PM is being elastic in his interpretation of his own ethical rules.**

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Far too many people in television provide a safe space for politicians instead of pushing back and saying 'you didn't answer this question.' CNN's Jake Tapper is making it his signature to show pit bull-like tendencies when an interview subject avoids a question.

## Neuroscience explains why we fall

**Elderly are at risk when their brains work especially hard during ordinary tasks, new research finds**

Subtle changes in older people's brain activity may increase the risk of falls by as much as 32 per cent, according to a new medical research paper. iStock

**Genna Buck**  
Metro Canada



Vivian Kong knows first-hand how an elderly person's world can shrink after a serious fall.

Her grandfather has been using a cane since he slipped in a parking lot several years back, but it was his latest fall, about two years ago, that really affected his independence.

"He now lives in assisted living — he had his own apartment for years — doesn't use transit anymore, and because doctors don't know why his most recent fall happened, he now owns a scooter and uses a cane," says Kong, 26, of Toronto.

Falls affect one in three Canadians over 65 every year, account for more seniors' hos-

pitalizations than any other injury, and cost about \$2 billion annually, according to the Public Health Agency of Canada.

A new study has shed some light on why so many of those falls, like Kong's grandfather's, go unexplained.

Subtle changes in older people's brain activity — impossible to measure directly without expensive imaging equipment — may increase the risk of falls by as much as 32 per cent, according to a new paper in the journal *Neurology*.

And the changes begin years before doctors and family members can spot any outward signs of trouble.

The 166 seniors (average age 75) in the study had no disabilities, dementia or gait problems. They were hooked up to a machine that monitored

activity of the prefrontal cortex; the decision-making part of the brain.

Then they were asked to do tasks such as walking and reciting every other letter of the alphabet at the same time.

The people whose brains were working especially hard during that particular task, possibly to compensate for mild cognitive decline, were much more likely to suffer a fall over the next four years. The result remained even after researchers controlled for other risk factors.

These findings are important because care providers could be missing some people who are at risk, said Matt Aymar, knowledge translation coordinator at the injury-prevention organization Parachute.

"My initial reaction was



**“Because doctors don't know why his most recent fall happened, he now owns a scooter and uses a cane.”**

Vivian Kong, 26, whose grandfather now lives in assisted living after a bad fall

wow," Aymar said. "Here is a warning sign, and it's coming a little earlier down the road."

Someone who can pass a typical screening test with ease — get out of a chair, walk three meters, turn around and walk back with a normal gait — might be "using more brain than their friends" to do it, Aymar said.

More research is needed to learn the underlying causes of

falls, so new interventions can be designed, he added. "We could really benefit from more prevention. It will save society a lot of money and give older adults vitality they deserve as much as anybody else."

A fall, especially accompanied by a broken hip, is often the "slippery slope" to a steep decline, Aymar said.

According to Hamilton, Ont. occupational therapist Kayla

McDowell, "Sometimes something as simple as a fall in the bathroom can really devastate someone's world."

"Adult children who work full-time and have families are often relied upon to pick up pieces like meal prep, laundry, and, depending on the severity of the injury from the fall, even things like toileting. This puts a lot of pressure on families and individuals," she said.

Kong's family has been relatively lucky in that regard.

"(My grandfather's) English isn't very good, so there are limited (medical) resources, but he's still pretty independent. He goes out with seniors' groups, and finds Chinese-speaking taxi drivers to take him places. He just moves a lot more slowly and my parents fuss over him a lot more."

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# La La Land struts into awards season

## NOMINATIONS

### Musical leads way with seven Golden Globe nominations

Damien Chazelle's Los Angeles musical La La Land sang and danced its way to a leading seven Golden Globes nominations, with Barry Jenkins' celebrated coming-of-age tale Moonlight close on its heels with six nods.

La La Land earned nominations for its lead actors, Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, as well as best picture, comedy or musical. The film also scored nominations for directing, screenplay, score and original song in the nominations announced Monday in Los Angeles by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association.

Moonlight led the field in the dramatic categories, including best picture. It earned nods for Jenkins' directing and script, supporting actor favourite Mahershala Ali and supporting actress Naomie Harris.

The other nominees for best picture, drama, were Manchester by the Sea, Lion, Hell or High Water and Mel Gibson's Hacksaw Ridge.

The People v. O.J. Simpson continued its awards success with five nominations, including best limited series and nods for stars Sarah Paulson, Courtney B. Vance, Sterling K. Brown and John Travolta. But the TV categories were also populated by more recent acclaimed shows not eligible for September's Emmy Awards, including



Emma Stone has already won a raft of film awards for her leading role in Los Angeles musical La La Land. CONTRIBUTED

The Night Of, Westworld, Atlanta, This Is Us and Insecure. HBO led the networks with 14 nominations.

The film nominations also verified that this year's awards season isn't nearly so white as last year's. Along with Moonlight, nominations were heaped on Denzel Washington's August Wilson adaptation Fences (including acting nods for Washington and Viola Davis) and the interracial marriage drama Loving (leads Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton were each nominated).

Ryan Reynolds joined fellow Canadian Gosling in the actor,

musical or comedy category for his leading role in R-rated Marvel hit Deadpool.

In a sign of Hollywood's increasing dichotomy between mega blockbusters and smaller independent films, the lead nominee getters were overwhelmingly independent. Lionsgate led the way with 10 nods thanks largely to La La Land.

The indie outfit A24, producer of Moonlight, followed with nine. Amazon Studios, which is distributing Manchester by the Sea, outranked giants like the Walt Disney Co. (three) and Warner Bros. (just one).

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## DEDICATION

### Reynolds salutes SickKids

Canadian actor Ryan Reynolds dedicated his award at the 22nd annual Critics' Choice Awards to the Toronto's SickKids Foundation and Make-a-Wish foundation.

"I gotta start by thanking the entire Deadpool team, without whom I would not be standing up here," said Vancouver-born Reynolds in his thank-you speech for the Entertainment Weekly Entertainer of the Year award.

"Deadpool was an 11-year-odyssey for me to get up here and it resonated with a lot of people. The character had cancer and some of the people that this character resonated with were sick kids. So I would like to dedicate this honour to Make-a-



Ryan Reynolds dedicated his award in the memory of Grace Bowen, centre, with her sister MacKenzie. SUBMITTED

Wish foundation and the Sick-Kids Foundation of Toronto, two incredible organizations that do so much for so many kids in need."

Reynolds also dedicated his

award in memory of two children, Connor McGrath and Grace Bowen. "They didn't lose the battle, but they started a fight, and it's up to us to finish it. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE





Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James, shown with his daughter Zhurie, is backing an HBO doc on Muhammad Ali. AP FILE PHOTO

# LeBron James backs Ali doc

## TELEVISION

### Basketball star exec produces multi-part film on boxing icon

King James is set to tell the story of The Greatest.

Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James will be the execu-

tive producer of an HBO documentary on Muhammad Ali, who died earlier this year. The as-yet-untitled film will be directed by Antoine Fuqua, who also helmed the boxing drama Southpaw and Training Day. Fuqua will also produce.

James has been a longtime admirer of Ali, the boxing great and social activist. James recently pledged a \$2.5 donation to a new exhibit on Ali at

the Smithsonian Institution.

"He transcended sports and used his platform to empower people, which paved the way for all athletes and people of every race and gender that came after him, myself included," he said. James' SpringHill Entertainment, which he co-founded with business partner and close friend Maverick Carter, will produce the multipart film. HBO says the

documentary will "explore Ali's greatest triumphs and comebacks, painting an intimate portrait of a man who, against all odds, dreamed and achieved the impossible, over and over again."

HBO said it will combine archival footage with cinematic recreations to tell Ali's story.

Ali died June 3 at the age of 74.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



## SPONSORED CONTENT

RBC

# 12 days of giving

What would you do with an extra \$150 in your pocket at this time of year? Buy a well-deserved gift for yourself? Treat the kids to a day of snowboarding? Thanks to RBC, youth across the country are happily giving that \$150 away.

Inspired by the ideas select young Canadians came up with for RBC's #Make150Count campaign, RBC has created the 12 Days of Giving. #Make150Count — a nod to Canada's big birthday next year — offers youth between ages 16 and 25 \$150 to make a difference in their communities.

Since the campaign launched in October, young Canadians have come up with hundreds of inspirational ideas and acted upon them, says Mary DePaoli, RBC's chief brand and communications officer. She mentions one young girl, Melissa, a patient at SickKids, who used her \$150 to buy games and books for the waiting room in the oncology department. Melissa's dad matched the \$150 so she could buy additional Tim Hortons gift cards for parents of newly

diagnosed cancer patients.

Another participant, Harleen, handed out flowers and kind notes to strangers around her University of Victoria campus. Janine from Edmonton filled up five large shoe boxes with toys, books and personal care items to be sent to kids in underprivileged parts of the world. Torontonians Jai used the money to make gift bags for the homeless, filled with scarves, hats, mitts and socks with a handwritten note wishing them happy holidays. And Ryan from Halifax treated three teens from the Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre to a day of surfing lessons, building confidence and friendships.

Beginning today and throughout the next 12 Days of Giving, RBC will be using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to share some of these inspirational stories from the #Make150Count recipients. Search #Make150Count to see a new one each day.

RBC hopes these ideas will encourage others to give, share and provide comfort this holiday season. "This campaign taps into the goodness within all of us and proves that when we invest in youth, great things can happen," says DePaoli.

Tell us how you will #Make150Count and give back over the holidays, and stay tuned for a special celebration of the projects and people on Canada Day.

In the meantime, RBC is thrilled to see young Canadians doing so much to help their communities prosper, as well as inspiring young and old during the holidays.

## How to get started

To kick off the 12 Days of Giving, here are a few suggestions to get started:

- Perform a random act of kindness
- Help the homeless
- Give the gift of adventure
- Donate to a charity
- Collect essential items for a food bank
- Organize a community gathering or activity
- Pay it forward
- Spend time with a senior
- Volunteer at a local animal shelter
- Recognize someone in your community
- Act locally, live globally
- Lend a helping hand



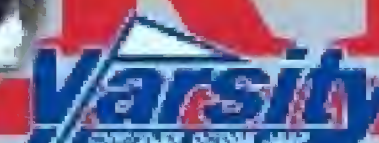
Janine in Alberta shows her participation in the #Make150Count campaign. CONTRIBUTED

When we invest in youth great things happen.

#Make150Count







## IN BRIEF

### Stamps bring back Power

The Calgary Stampeders have re-signed fullback Charlie Power to a contract extension.

The 25-year-old from Okotoks, who has played 33 regular-season games for the Stampeders, was eligible for free agency in February.

Power's career stats include 26 special-teams tackles, a pair of forced fumbles, a defensive tackle, a blocked punt and three catches for 10 yards.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

### Supreme Court secures NFL's \$1B concussion pact

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday rejected challenges to the estimated \$1-billion plan by the NFL to settle thousands of concussion lawsuits filed by former players, clearing the way for payouts to begin to those who have been diagnosed with brain injuries linked to repeated concussions.

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### Bruins dump Habs in OT

Ryan Spooner scored in overtime as the visiting Boston Bruins beat the Montreal Canadiens 2-1 on Monday night.

Austin Czarnik scored for the Bruins (16-12-2) in regulation time. Tuukka Rask made 29 saves for the win as Boston handed Montreal a rare home loss.

Paul Byron scored late in the third period to salvage a point for Montreal (19-6-4). THE CANADIAN PRESS

# Metropolitan Division teams having their way

NHL

## Clubs in the Eastern branch are 29-7-3 since Dec. 3

Justin Williams knows from missing the playoffs twice with defending Stanley Cup champions just how difficult it is to make it to the post-season, which is why the Metropolitan Division standings have his full attention.

"I see our division, I see everyone winning," the Washington Capitals right-winger said. "The top eight in the East is going to be tough to get in this year. We plan to be at the top."

Even for the Capitals, who ran away with the division, the top seed in the Eastern Conference and the Presidents' Trophy last season, that's easier said than done. They're on pace for 112 points, which would leave them in third place because the Metropolitan is home to five of the top eight teams in the NHL.

Since Dec. 3, Metropolitan teams are an astounding 29-7-3, led by the Cup champion Pittsburgh Penguins, New York Rangers, red-hot Philadelphia Flyers, Columbus Blue Jackets and streaking Capitals. The Flyers have won a league-best nine in a row, the Blue Jackets six



Jakub Voracek and the Philadelphia Flyers have given their fans a reason to cheer having won their last nine games. MATT SLOCUM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

and the Penguins six, so the Capitals' four-game winning streak doesn't have them moving up the standings.

"Win them all if you can," coach Barry Trotz said. "You have a bad day, you could fall like three or four spots. You could go from being a wild-card team to not being in the

playoffs to being second in your division if you win."

The competition is so hot that the New York Islanders are still in last place despite winning six of their last 10 and the New Jersey Devils and Carolina Hurricanes are five and seven points out of the last playoff spot in the East. At the top of

the division, the Penguins, Rangers, Flyers, Blue Jackets and Capitals have combined to win their last 28 games.

"Everyone's playing at a high level," Rangers centre Derek Stepan said. "There's no room. We're in our playoff push."

No team has pushed toward the playoffs harder than the Flyers, who were 13th in the East before their run began Nov. 27. Philadelphia has risen to fifth in the East behind 15 points from Jakub Voracek, a .930 save percentage from goaltender Steve

## SID ON A TEAR

■ Since Jan. 1, Crosby has a league-best 90 points in only 67 games (1.34 per game), bettering the next closest player (Patrick Kane) by 12 points despite playing in six fewer games.

■ Crosby's also No. 1 with 48 goals in that span, including a league-leading 21 in 23 games this season.

Mason and a strong power play and penalty kill.

Coach Dave Hakstol said the Flyers are finding different ways to win games, as evidenced by them beating the Edmonton Oilers 6-5 and then a few days later the Detroit Red Wings 1-0 in overtime.

"I think we're playing better defensively as a team," said Voracek, who has 32 points and trails only Edmonton's Connor McDavid in the NHL scoring race. "When we're making mistakes, Mason is playing unreal ... I think as an overall game we got better not only over the winning streak but in the games before. We lost the games when we should've won earlier in the year and now we're winning them. It's a good sign."

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**You could go from being a wild-card team to not being in the playoffs to being second in your division if you win.** Capitals coach Barry Trotz

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MAKE IT TONIGHT

# Harmonious Roasted Chicken and Grapes



PHOTO: MAYA VISNIE

**Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh**  
For Metro Canada

You might find this combination unexpected but we promise you'll love pairing of sweet grapes with shallots and garlic.

**Ready in 35 minutes**  
Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 25 minutes  
Serves 4

**Ingredients**

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken thighs
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 cups red seedless grapes
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp dried thyme

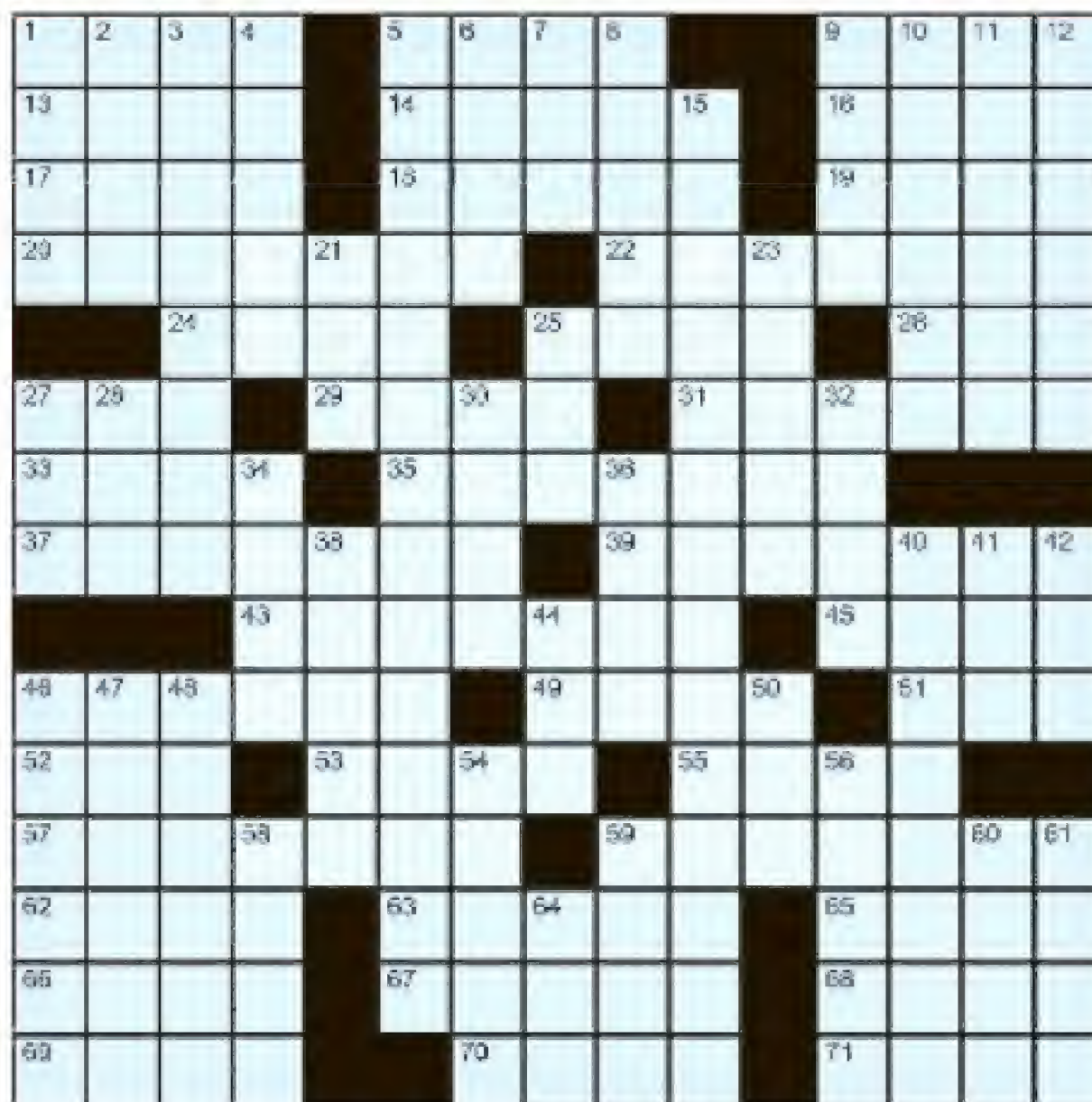
**Directions**

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a large, oven-safe skillet, warm up olive oil over medium high heat. Brown — but don't worry about cooking through — the chicken thighs, about 3 minutes each side. Remove the chicken from the skillet and place on a clean plate.
3. Reduce the heat under the skillet to medium and toss in the shallots and garlic. Cook about 3 minutes until they soften. Add grapes, stock, vinegar, sugar and thyme and stir. Allow the sauce to begin to simmer.
4. Nestle the chicken pieces into the sauce and place the skillet in the oven. Bake for 20 minutes. Serve over cous cous, mashed potatoes or polenta.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT  
SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

## CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



**ACROSS**

1. Cleanser brand, \_ and Span
5. Lip \_
9. Prescriptions, commonly
13. Faux pas
14. Tragically Hip's " \_ by a Century"
16. Handling the matter: 2 wds.
17. Boot
18. Herman's Hermits singer Peter
19. Jason's craft
20. Marxist revolutionary (b.1879 - d.1940) exiled by Stalin
22. Audience's highest showing of appreciation
24. Shark variety
25. Crossword component
26. Prompt in acting
27. Criticize
29. Questionable
31. \_! Camera! Action!
33. Nero's 8
35. Reacts to the sniffing salts: 2 wds.
37. Loud noisiness, States-style
39. Most extensive
43. Is in need of repair
45. Ins and \_
46. Relay knowledge
49. Jealousy
51. Wee woofer
52. 19th Greek alphabet letter
53. Twisted
55. Vow
57. "Vikings" ailer, The \_ Channel

59. Groups of fish
62. Moreover
63. Ms. Hall of ABC daytime show "The Chew"
65. \_ Mountains (Range in Russia)
66. Spelled-out grades
67. "The Un-

- touchables" role, \_ Ness
68. Early helicopter
69. Increases
70. Superior at a French monastery
71. Door fastener

**DOWN**

1. Prude
2. Really rain
3. Getting a good night's sleep inability
4. Terra's pot tailer
5. CIBC = Canadian Imperial \_ \_ \_
6. Holler at the harbour?

7. Roaring sign
8. Lord's house
9. Castle defence
10. Fortify the food
11. Do this after a big Winter storm: 2 wds.
12. Rocks
15. 1997 Keanu Reeves

- thriller co-starring Al Pacino: 2 wds.
21. Schuss
23. Mine entrances
25. Exerciser's club
27. Piping stuff, commonly
28. Feel awful
30. \_ \_ song (Cheaply)
32. Attend: 2 wds.
34. \_-European (Language family)
36. Flush
38. Screen legend Greta
40. Super joyfulness
41. After-R trio
42. Sugar amt.
44. Comprehend
46. Home of Odysseus
47. Used a hammer
48. Was a mother hen
50. Cry of impatience!
54. Spiral-horned antelope
56. Sturdy
58. Chuck
59. Neatnik opposite
60. Metallica drummer Mr. Ulrich
61. Swill
64. Chest bone

## ★ IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

**Aries** March 21 - April 20  
Your daily routine will change today. Expect to meet new faces and see new places. Avoid arguments with others, which might occur because of today's Full Moon.

**Taurus** April 21 - May 21  
Disputes about money and possessions are likely because of the full moon. Keep an eye on your possessions and finances. Be careful not to lose something.

**Gemini** May 22 - June 21  
Today, the only full moon in your sign all year is happening. This can create stress with partners and close friends. It's a jumpy, unpredictable day!

**Cancer** June 22 - July 23  
You feel restless today because of the full moon. (The moon is your ruler.) Stay calm and carry on.

**Leo** July 24 - Aug. 23  
Conflict with friends might occur today because of the full moon's energy. But they also might occur because someone throws you a curveball or does something you don't expect.

**Virgo** Aug. 24 - Sept. 23  
This is a tough full moon for you. You feel pulled between the demands of home and family versus the demands of your job and your career. (You can't ignore home and family.)

**Libra** Sept. 24 - Oct. 23  
Be careful, because this is an accident-prone day. Obviously, an accident doesn't need to happen, but it does mean you have to be more aware and mindful. Keep your eyes open.

**Scorpio** Oct. 24 - Nov. 22  
Financial disputes and money problems might occur because of the full moon today. This might include arguments about cash or something that you own. Be patient.

**Sagittarius** Nov. 23 - Dec. 21  
Today, the only full moon all year that is opposite your sign is taking place. This might introduce tension and conflict with partners and close friends. Have patience.

**Capricorn** Dec. 22 - Jan. 20  
Be patient with co-workers today, because everyone can feel the Full Moon's energy. This tends to make people feel excitable and inclined to overreact.

**Aquarius** Jan. 21 - Feb. 19  
Be patient with kids today, and likewise, be patient with your friends or members of groups. People are inclined to be touchy today and even tomorrow because of the full moon.

**Pisces** Feb. 20 - March 20  
This is a poor day to try to keep everyone happy, especially bosses, parents, VIPs, your family and your job. It's all too much! Just do what you can.

## CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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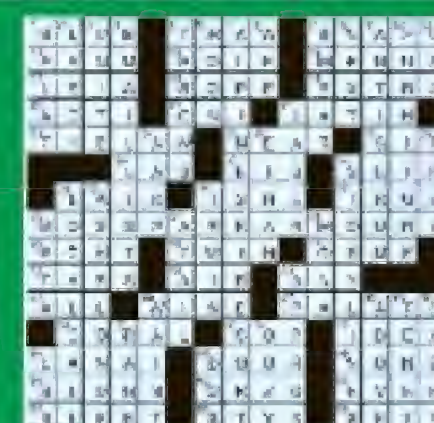
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## YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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| 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| 7 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 1 |
| 4 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| 3 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 4 |



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